

February 2, 2023

Maryland General Assembly
Economic Matters Committee
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB0264/SB0400 Places of Public Accommodation - Motion Picture Houses - Captioning

Dear Committee Members:

I write on behalf of Maryland/DC Hands & Voices ("MD/DC H&V") to offer our Board's enthusiastic support of the above-captioned bills. MD/DC H&V is dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf or hard of hearing without bias around communication modes or methodology. We provide parents with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children. MD/DC H&V is a non-profit group of parents and professionals, from all across Washington, D.C. and Maryland, who believe that all families can make the best choices for their child if they have access to good information and support.

HB0264/SB0400 will provide a necessary and efficient accommodation for Deaf and hard of hearing people. In addition, open captions help to make public spaces more inclusive for everyone, whether they are Deaf or hard of hearing, nonnative English speakers, or simply people who find it easier to enjoy a film when the dialogue is presented onscreen. As a result, captioning will help all Marylanders.

These bills directly align with MD/DC H&V's mission. We enthusiastically support these bills and strongly encourage your Committee to adopt them.

Thank you for your time and efforts on this important issue.

Regards,

Sarah Ann Maguire

Maryland/DC Hands & Voices Board